

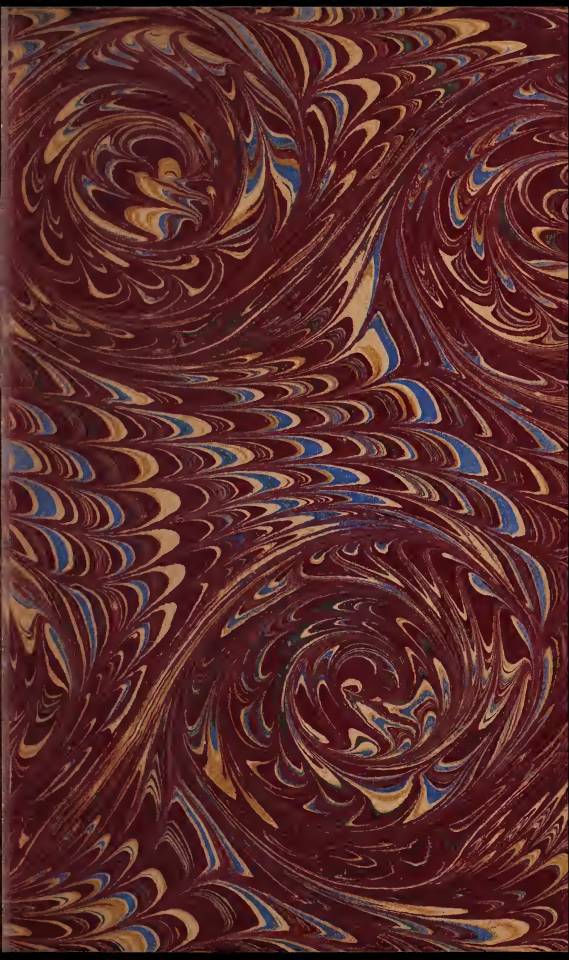


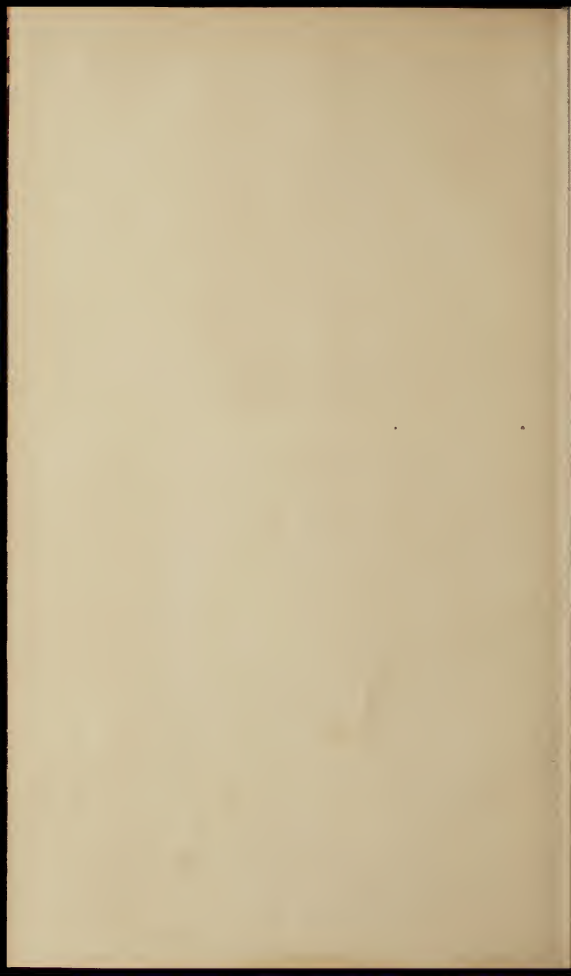
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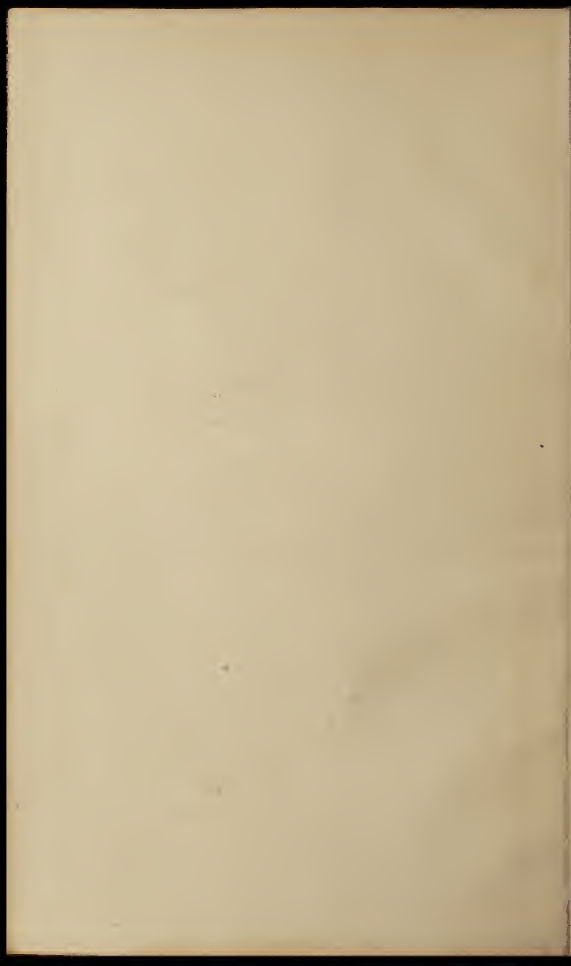
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A GENUINE  
L E T T E R  
FROM

Mr. JOHN BRAINARD,

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G O S P E L,

A MISSIONARY to the *Indians in America*,  
and MINISTER to a Congregation of *In-*  
*dians, at Bethel in East Jersey,*

To his FRIEND in *ENGLAND.*

Giving an Account of the Success of his La-  
bours, as well as the Difficulties and Discou-  
ragements that attend his MISSION among  
those Savages.

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*Bethel in New Jersey, Oct. 4. 1752.*

*Reverend and Honoured Sir,*

**W**HEN your courteous and obliging Letter by Captain *Grant* arrived, I was in *New-England*, using Endeavours to procure some Assistance, for carrying on the good Work among the *Indians*, the People of my Charge; and since my Return have been in such a low State of Health, and withal so crouded with a Throng of Business, that I have not been able to send you an Answer so soon by Months, as I could have desired. This I hope will, in some measure, apologize for me, and that you will be so good as to over-look my Deficiency.

And now, dear Sir, what shall I say? I cannot but admire the Goodness of God that he should put it into the Hearts of his Servants, at so great a Distance, to think of these poor People, and to shew any Regard to me, who am *less than the least of all Saints*. But God does his sovereign Pleasure, and it is the great Happiness of his Children, that he rules and governs the World.

I accept your Generosity with much Thankfulness, and I hope some Degree of Gratitude to the Bountiful Author of all our Mercies, as well as the Instrument he is pleased to employ, and shall see that your Orders are punctually fulfilled. Your Request likewise respecting some Account of the *Indian Affairs*,

I shall endeavour to comply with, though I am exceedingly crouded for Time.

I have been employed as a Missionary among these *Indians* for above four Years and a half, besides Officiating for my Brother several Months during his last Sickness. In this Space of Time the Number has considerably encreased, though for more than two Years after I came, we were visited with much Sickness and great Mortality.

We have now near forty Families belonging to our Society; and our Church consists of thirty-seven Communicants, besides two or three more that stand as Candidates for Admission. Our School has sometimes consisted of above fifty Children, but the Number at present is not altogether so great. The Children in general seem to be as apt to learn as *English* Children, and some are very forward, considering the Opportunity they have had. Not less than twenty I believe are able to read pretty distinctly in the Bible, and repeat most of the Assembly's Short Catechism: And some are able to repeat it through, together with the Proofs, giving Chapter and Verse; and sundry of them can write a decent legible Hand. We have one training up for the Ministry, in a great Measure at the Expence of the Society in *Scotland*; he is a very promising young Man, makes good Proficiency in his Learning, and is, I hope, truly pious; may the Lord continue his Life, and  
make

make him a rich Blessing to his Pagan Brethren.

I have spent the most of my Time since I have been employed as a Missionary ; among these People, but not wholly confined myself to them. I have taken several Journies out among the more remote *Indians*, and some to those at a great Distance. By this Means, with the Blessing of God on my Labours, I have persuaded sundry to come from distant Parts and settle here, where they and their Children, have the Advantages of Instruction, which I trust have been blest to the saving Conversion of some: May the Lord daily encrease the Number !

These People thus settled on this Spot, do universally do something more or less at Husbandry. But they have been brought up in such an idle, wandering manner, that it is very difficult to keep them steady to any Business ; and indeed it is not without Difficulty that they learn to do the several sorts of Work that belong to Tillage of Land, &c. But I find they gain upon it in both these Respects, and I hope in some time will come to live like Christian People.

I am getting some of the Boys put out to learn Trades, and propose shortly to set up a Working School for the Girls, at which they must be taught to spin, knit, &c. I have had my Mind upon this for some time, and have made one or two Attempts before, but have been unable to support the Expence of it.

But having of late obtained some Assistance from *New England* and elsewhere, I hope to be able to carry on the Affair to some good Purpose : And I cannot but think, with the Blessing of Heaven, it will be of excellent Use to the Cause I am engaged in :—Serve abundantly to, civilize and bring them into a more comfortable Way of Living. I propose another School of the like Nature for the Boys, such as are not put out to Trades, at which they may be learned to work, and from their very Childhood inured and trained up to the Business of Husbandry. This might be another excellent Help to our Cause if it could be obtained. I have no Provision for it yet, saving that at a very considerable Expence I have secured a large Tract of Land, suitable for the Business to be managed upon, and hope before a great while, by some Means or other to accomplish my Design, and for the Blessing of Heaven to succeed my Endeavours.

I You desire me Sir, in your Letter, to let you know “ my encouraging Experiences and “ Prospects, my Discouragements and Ob- “ structions.” Some of these I have occasionally hinted at already, and shall further observe, that as the Number of Inhabitants in this Place has encreased notwithstanding the great Mortality among us ; so our Church is enlarg’d, although we lost at least a third Part of those that were Members of it when I came. And although some that were most  
hopeful,

hopeful, and gave the fairest Prospect of being a Blessing among us were removed, yet the Lord hath mercifully raised up others, who in some Measure fill up their Places. Some that not long since were the basest Drunkards, are now become sober and live a regular Christian Life. We have a very considerable Number of serious regular Christians, who are an Ornament to Religion; although some that make a Profession have grievously backsliden. The Lord has preserved and continued a Christian Congregation together, tho' many Attempts have been made by Satan and his Instruments, to disperse and destroy it. And there are sundry Persons, besides Professors; that are under serious Impressions and Thoughtfulness about the great Concerns of their Souls: And one at least hopefully converted of late, whom I propose shortly to admit into the Church. And though we have many careless unconcerned Souls, that seem to have little Thoughtfulness about the Things of another World, yet it is evident the Congregation in general, make Proficiency in Knowledge both as to spiritual and temporal Things; and are abundantly more and more civilized, as to their Dress, Behaviour, and Manner of Living. These Things give me some Encouragement, and cause me to hope that the Lord will place his Name here and delight to build us up; that he will glorify the Riches of his Grace, in establishing his Church in this Place; spread the saving

Knowledge of his Gospel far among the poor *Indians*; and cause his Grace to be made known even to their most distant Tribes.

As for the Difficulties I meet with, they are best known to God and my own Soul. But any one that considers the Education of barbarous uncultivated Heathens, will easily see, that it must be attended with no small Difficulty to bring such to a civilized christian Manner of Life. My Exercises among these People, I must needs say have been very pressing indeed, but *having obtained Help from God I yet live.*

The great and almost universal Propensity in the whole Nation of *Indians* to strong Drink, is a great Obstacle in the Way of their being brought to Christianity. This above all others is the Sin that easily besets them, and has been the greatest Blemish to the Cause of Religion among them in this Place. This Sin of *Drunkenness*, and the Effects of it, have given me inexpressible Trouble and Anxiety of Soul since I have been employed in this Business. And though I have done my utmost, and even summoned all the Powers of my Soul to represent the Evil of it; yet with some it is still prevalent.

And our Neighbours the white People are not a little accessory to the Commission of this Evil. There is scarce one of them that has strong Liquor to dispose of, but what will sell to the *Indians*, although I have set the Evil before them, and earnestly besought them not

to



to do it. And some I have been told will buy Drink in Taverns and public Houses, and give them, to see if they cannot make Christian *Indians* drunk as well as others. Some likewise have endeavoured to asperse my Character to the *Indians*, and represent me as a vagrant wandring Fellow, that wanted to pick up something among the *Indians* for a Living; but blessed be God, their malicious and groundless Aspersions have not had the desired Effect. The poor *Indians* are conscious to themselves that I am their good Friend, and sincerely engaged to promote their best Good.

Another thing that renders it exceeding difficult to bring the *Indians* into a Christian Method of Living, is an indolent wandring unsteady Disposition, which greatly prevails among them. In this Manner they have been educated, and it seems to be so rivetted into their Natures, that it is almost as difficult to reform them in this Point, as to change their Colour: This has been a sore Trial to me ever since I entered upon the Business. I have preached one Lecture after another upon this Subject, and used my utmost Endeavours in a more private Manner to reform them; and have reason to bless God my Labours in that Respect have not been altogether in vain, tho' I have yet much Exercise on that Head.

In my Journeyings abroad, especially over *Susquehanna* River, I have met with many Difficulties and Obstructions. The bodily  
 Fatigues

Fatigues of such Journeys I need not say much about, though they are not small to any one who makes the Experiment. That Road, and the Difficulties attending it, are the same that my Brother has given an Account of in his printed Journal. In my last Journey there, I travelled three Days without a House of any Sort whatsoever: And by Reason of the extreme Badness of the Way, and my Horse being deeply laden with Provisions for the Journey, I was obliged to go almost the whole on Foot. But my greatest Difficulty was the Disappointment I met with after I came there. I found my Way hedged up and an immovable Bar laid in my Path, and that principally by the Instrumentality of wicked Men, Emissaries of Satan; who trade among the *Indians*; these had persuaded them that I was sent by crafty Men with a View to bring them into a Snare, and finally deprive them of their Country and Liberties. Upon which the principal *Sachems* would not suffer me to preach, but the common Sort of People, being not so credulous of these false and groundless Stories, would freely have heard me. With these People I tarried near a Fortnight, and visiting from House to House, endeavoured in a more private Manner to refute the malicious Aspersions of the Traders, and bring them into a good Opinion of Christianity.

But among many other Difficulties, the Want of a more liberal Support has been a great



great Discouragement to me. Such Undertakings as this are very chargeable, and cannot be pursued to any good Purpose but at a great Expence; I have by no Means been able to take the most likely Measures to convert the Heathen, for Want of wherewithal to support the Expence that must Necessarily accrue. For Instance, in my last Journey to *Susquebanna*, I was obliged to go with one *Indian* only, and indeed had not a Farthing for his Encouragement, but was obliged to pass my Word that I would pay him when I could get Money. Soon after our Arrival there, he accidentally lamed himself, so that I had him to tend instead of receiving any Help from him: And to compleat our Misfortune we lost our Horses (which we supposed were stolen by an *Indian* Trader who was there at that Time) and found them no more during our tarrying in those Parts, altho' I employed *Indians* at least a Week to look for them, and consequently were put to unspeakable Difficulty in our return home.

Now if I had had a few Pounds for the Support of about half a dozen of my Christian *Indians* to have gone along with me, it would not only have saved me much Fatigue, but what is vastly more, would in all Probability have made my Journey prosperous: For these Christian *Indians* could have contradicted and refuted the false and groundless Aspersions of the *Indian* Traders; and besides I could certainly have had Liberty to preach to my  
own

own Company, and then, in all probability, had the whole Town to hear me out of Curiosity, as was once the Case in a former Journey there. But the Want of this rendered my Journey, with all its Toil and Fatigue, almost fruitless ; and this may serve as a Specimen of Instances too numerous to mention in this Place ; on this Account I have laboured under great Discouragement, but I hope and trust that as this Work of Grace among the *Indians* comes to be more generally known and spread abroad, there will be a greater Plenty of Provision for the Promotion of the same ; and may the Lord hasten the blissful Time ! Upon the whole, though I am feelingly sensible of many Difficulties and Discouragements in christianizing the *Indians*, yet I cannot but think there has been, and still is as much Encouragement as could rationally be expected, before any Attempts of this Kind were made, and that which is sufficient for us still to act upon, and to make farther Attempts of this Nature. There is ground to hope that within these seven Years last past, there have been at least forty Persons savingly converted to God, even in this small Place, which at most does not contain above two hundred Souls old and young of all Sorts ; and were there any spirited to go unto the more remote Parts where there are greater Numbers of these miserable Savages, who can tell what the Lord will do ? What a glorious Prospect might soon open ? What Numbers might we hope would quit  
the

the Service of the grand Impostor, and embrace the Offers of the blessed Gospel.

But in order to this, proper Measures must be taken, and suitable Provision made : This Work in an ordinary Way cannot be accomplished, but at great Expence. And would to God it were a Thing of more general Concern among Christians. It is affecting indeed, to see these poor benighted Souls groping in Darknes, and perishing for lack of Vision while the Light of the glorious Gospel is at their next Door ! To see them led Captive by the Prince of Darknes, while the glorious Victory of the All-conquering *Jesus*, and Redemption by him, are proclaimed almost within their Hearing. This is very affecting indeed, and I may well say with the Poet,—*Quis talia fando temperet alacrymis*. — And further, — *quæque ipse miserrima vidi*. Oh may the Time soon come, when the Lord will send out many faithful Labourers, especially into the Highways and Hedges, that the poor lost deluded Heathen might be gathered in. And may the set Time to favour *Zion* in general draw near. May the Harvest be great, and the Labourers be plenteous ; and you, Reverend and Honoured Sir, share largely in the Comforts and Glories of it in your own Soul, and in your dear Congregation. My Heart has long wished for the Revival of Religion in *Great-Britain*, as well as in our *American* Parts : And some times I entertain Hopes, that the Lord's Time is near. May the latter Day Glory be hastened, and the

*British*

*British* Realms and Plantations, share largely in the same.

The Quarterly Days of Prayer for the Prosperity of *Zion* are observed by some in these Parts, and have been very constantly attended in my Congregation : And some of my People have appeared very affectionate and warmly engaged at such Times. May the Lord hear and answer the Supplications of his People, and cause his Church to arise and flourish, and even become a Praise in the whole Earth.

I humbly thank you, dear Sir, for your pious Endeavours by Letter, to animate and strengthen me in my arduous and difficult Work. I hope I shall also be favoured with an Interest in your Prayers, that I may be faithful to my Trust, and successful in my Undertaking. You was pleased to encourage me likewise about using some Endeavours to afford me further Assistance as to outward Things ; and desire me to let you know whether it would be best sent in Money or Goods. I thankfully acknowledge your Kindness, and must beg leave to submit it to yourself, to do that which you can with the greater Convenience ; either will be very acceptable, and if nothing, still I shall be under great Obligations for what is past. I bless God, I am not in pinching Necessity, and yet I must need say, my Income is much too small, and I cannot well carry on my Business without a more liberal Supply. My People are most of them extremely indigent, and instead of affording me any Help, I am obliged continually

ally to be assisting them in Money, Provision, &c. Nor is it possible, for any one who has either any Bowels of Compassion, or Concern for the Promotion of the Cause, to live among them without. My annual Allowance from the Society, is no more than \* forty Pounds Sterling; whereas sundry of our Missionaries from the Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign Parts have sixty, and some seventy, besides something very considerable from their People, I believe, near half as much more. And by the way, whether that Money be improved in the best manner, while it is employed to maintain Missionaries in a populous and plentiful Country, as *New-England* in particular, where I believe there are not less than four hundred regular well settled Ministers, and the People universally able to maintain the Gospel among themselves: Whether it was the Design of the first Founders of that Society, and of the present Donors to it, to sink thousands of Pounds annually, only to gratify a few Sticklers for a Party, I leave others of more Wisdom and Knowledge in that Affair to determine. But I am sure it has been no small Grief and Exercise of Mind to me, to see such Sums of Money expended in that manner, while our poor Heathen Neighbours lie almost utterly neglected; Satan the Prince of Darkness suffered to reign in Triumph among them without Let or Molestation, whole Nations being subjected to him, and perishing by thousands for want of Knowledge. This appears to me one of the most affecting

fecting Things that can be mentioned or thought of : And I bless the Father of Mercies that I am not left to spend his Substance in such a way.

But I am sensible I have exceed the Bounds of a Letter, and should not have so far presumed upon your Patience, had it not been for this Clause in yours. " And let it be a long Letter that you write giving me an Account, " &c." This, Sir, I hope will excuse me.

And now, dear Sir, I conclude with acknowledging all your Kindness and Goodness to me, and wishing that the best of Blessings from above may descend upon your Person, Family, and Flock. That the Lord would make your Labours abundantly successful among them, and bless you with a glorious Harvest. I would likewise desire a Remembrance in your Addresses to the Throne of Grace for me, my People, and the Cause of God among the *Indians*. And if you should have Leisure, and think it worth while to write, please to direct for me at *Bethel in New Jersey*, to the Care of Mr. *William Grant*, Merchant, in *Second-street, Philadelphia*; or to the Care of Mr. *Dennys de Berdt*, Merchant, in *Artillery-Court, Chiswel-street, London*.

I am with, the greatest Respect,

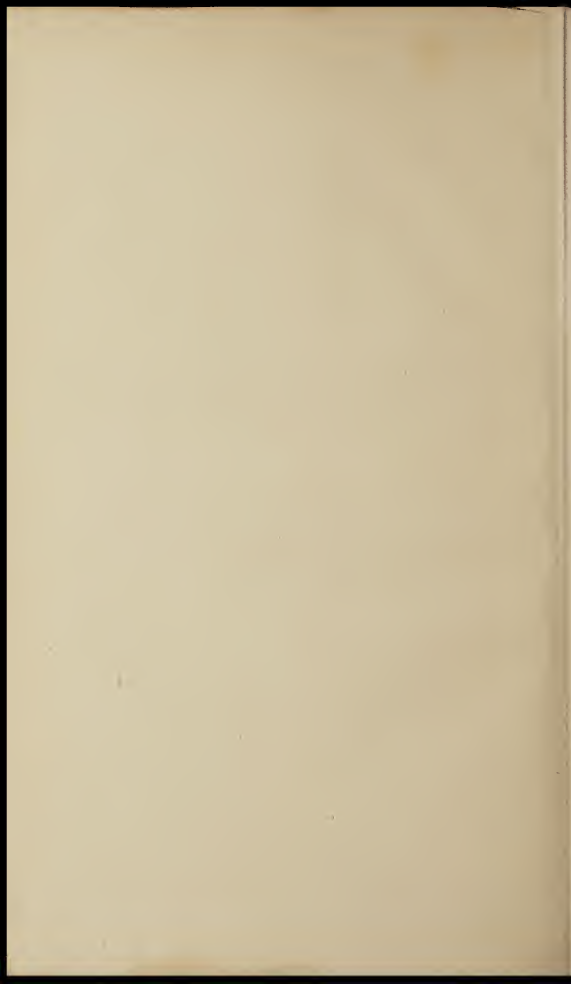
Reverend Sir,

Your much obliged

And very humble Servant,

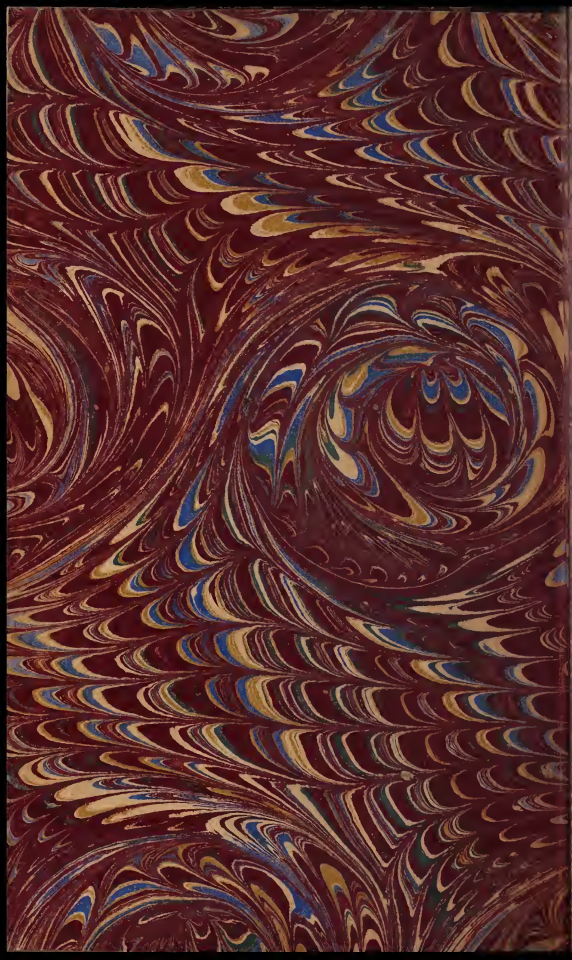
JOHN BRAINARD.













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